



New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Natasha Johnson, Chair

Niurca Louis, Vice Chair

January 5, 2017

10:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

Capital Center Building

50 East State Street, 2nd Floor

Commissioner's Large Conference Room

Trenton, NJ 08625

Minutes

In Attendance:

Krystal Alexander
Christine Baker
Andrea Breitwieser
Suzanne Conrad
Gerard Costa
Jessica Gregory Cowan
Diane Dellanno
Aldina Hovde
Natasha Johnson
Niurca Louis
Cheryl Mojta
Patty Mojta
Kerrie Ocasio
Kathleen Roe
Rush Russell
Svetlana Shpiegel
Charmaine Thomas

Graduate Assistant the Center for Child Advocacy, Montclair Univ.
Metro-RDTC at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center
Department of Human Services
Prof/Voc. Educational Administrator
Dir. of Autism/Early Childhood
DCF – Division of Family & Community Partnerships
Advocates for Children of NJ
NJ Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
DHS – Division of Family Development
Robins' Nest, Inc.
NJ Child Assault Prevention Program
Prevent Child Abuse – New Jersey
Rutgers University School of Social Work's Institute for Families
Dir. of Parents Anonymous
Prevent Child Abuse-NJ
Center for Child Advocacy and Policy
DCF – Family and Community Partnerships & Div. on Women

Call-In

Jeanne McMahon

Director Health and Family Support Projects / SPANNJ

Staff

LaTasha Holmes
Daniel Yale

DCF – Assistant to the Commissioner
DCF – Executive Coordinator



The Pledge of Allegiance – The Prevention Committee was informed that there is pending legislation that will mandate that all boards, task forces, councils, committees, etc. add the Pledge of Allegiance to their meeting agendas. In anticipation, this item was added to the meeting agenda. However, at this time the legislation had not been finalized. As a result, an update will be provided at the next meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

A brief welcome was provided by Natasha Johnson. Due to the full attendance, she requested that each attendee briefly introduce themselves.

Review and approve November 3, 2016 Minutes

Minutes approved with minimal grammatical edits.

Business

Vision and Goal Setting – Effectively Engaging in Prevention

- **Identification of Prevention Strategies** (i.e. economic and food security, healthy child development, etc.)
 - Strategies to include:
 - Early Intervention – working hands on with families to better engage the prevention programs that are available;
 - How to “get the message out” regarding prevention - It was determined that a clear, consistent, and visible message is necessary to increase awareness in the public;
 - Prevention needs to be introduced students in higher education;
 - Committee members were encouraged to increase communication among multiple agencies;
 - Child Care centers and homeless shelters can be used to educate families on prevention programs; and
 - Educating professionals and educators in prevention strategies and understanding the nature of children’s problems.

- **Inclusion of Protective Factors**

The Committee discussed the need to focus on strategies with regards to the inclusion of the protective factors that have proven to be helpful. There was discussion regarding healthcare and the role of the prevention task force in terms of advocacy. It was agreed that it is necessary to focus on what can be done to strengthen families’ access to supports during stressful situations. It was suggested that an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) framework is a useful tool as it removes stigma and helps parents understand how their experiences inform their parenting approaches. The importance of using language that parents can understand rather than using terminology used in the industry was further discussed. It was agreed that parents become more engaged when they can understand what is being said and don’t feel like they are being blamed.



Additionally, the Committee discussed the importance of infant and early childhood mental health services and consultation. There is a program entitled Socio-Emotional Formation Initiative (SEFI), which implements the pyramid model. Montclair State University continues to develop curriculum such as Keeping Babies and Children in Mind, a training series of workshops in infant and early childhood mental health that is being offered at no cost to professionals who work with infants, toddlers, young children and their families (pregnancy through age eight). Additionally, the Committee was informed that Montclair State University will be holding a conference on May 11, 2017 regarding early childhood mental health consultations and a “think tank” on May 12, 2017 to discuss the limitations of services for preschool expulsion and suspension in which all are invited.

- **External Opportunities to Participate and Contribute (i.e. NJ Council for Young Children)**

Some examples of the external opportunities are: Infant Child Health Committee, Home Visiting Workgroup, Head Start, SEFI, Early Care Alliance Meetings, and the County Council for Young Children. The Committee discussed that it was important to have awareness about what prevention issues are already being addressed by other agencies, partners, groups, etc. By being aware of the programs that are already under way, the Committee will be able to achieve goals without necessarily committing resources. It was agreed that prevention work cannot be done alone and that there needs to be interdepartmental and interagency collaboration. The Committee agreed that it would be advantageous to have regular attendance from a representative from Department of Education as a member of the Prevention Committee in order to further assist in future tasks.

- **Workgroup review and Assessment**

- **Prevention Course Development Workgroup**

The initial goal of this workgroup was to develop a curriculum guide to offer important resources and explain why they should be used. The guide was not meant to be comprehensive, but rather a way to guide people to the priority concepts. The workgroup indicated that there have been some delays with development of the curriculum guide as some people were unable to contribute as planned. The goal of the workgroup is to complete what they have been working on by the middle of January and to “take stock” of their progress. The Doris Duke Fellowship was asked to provide assistance. However, the Committee is awaiting the NJ Attorney General’s Office’s legal advice. If the assistance can be accepted, the curriculum guide will obtain an endorsement from the Doris Duke Fellowship and the curriculum guide may also appear on their website. The committee was informed that there will be a working document available by June 2017.

Several committee members voiced the need for a curriculum guide as currently there is no prevention curriculum in higher education. However, given the dynamic nature of the document it



was agreed that there will be a need for leadership and guidance involving how it will be rolled out, how people will be aware that it exists, and why people would want to use it. It was suggested that the Committee speak with the Secretary of Higher Education, Rochelle Hendricks.

- **Prevention Plan Implementation Workgroup**

The purpose of this workgroup was to ensure that the Prevention Plan was implemented across multiple State departments. There was discussion about best practice and how the Committee could do more with the elements of the Prevention Plan. In the absence of the Chair of this workgroup, workgroup members informed the Committee that there were interviews and surveys conducted but there was variance in the final outcomes. As a result, the Committee requested that DCF staff contact the previous chair or resend the final report.

- **Prevention Standards Workgroup**

The purpose of this workgroup was to continue work with the Prevention Standards. Rutgers, the State University of NJ's School of Social Work's Institute for Families (IFF) conducted training for providers through August 2016. Additionally, a series of webinars, two for parents and two for professionals, were created and they are currently in the process of determining the process for roll out. There is a plan to use what was learned to work with the staff at IFF to better understand the Prevention Standards. The results will inform the work that will be done in the future. The webinars that were created will be distributed across other programs and agencies.

- **New Jersey Children's Trust Fund Marketing Campaign Workgroup**

The Communication Committee, in conjunction with the Prevention Committee, are currently working on a marketing campaign to educate people on what the Children's Trust Fund is, what it does, and how to donate. It was determined that social media will be utilized and a logo will be designed. The committee discussed there needs to be a common message for the public to inform them of the Task Force and of child abuse prevention. Some of these efforts require various resources which require clarity regarding the roles of the Prevention Committee, Task Force, and DCF in terms of the implementation of the marketing campaign.

- **Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children**

The Committee was informed that CTF no longer funds this program. An evaluation report will be completed by the end of the month and will be made available to the Committee.



2017 Prevention Plan Development

The Committee discussed that the current Prevention Plan ends in 2017. It was determined that the Committee needs to have tangible goals to work towards and that it should be very clear on which goals the Committee is focused. In addition, the Committee discussed the possibility of having a consultant assist in identifying critical success factors and activities and development of the next phase of the plan. Once identified, these activities would have a “shepherd” to ensure that the goals were attained. It was agreed that previously the current Plan has very broad goals and objectives. The Committee identified that the next iteration needs to have measurable, specific and action actionable goals as well as identification of partners who can assist in implementation. It was agreed that in order to refine the direction of the Prevention Plan, a conversation about feasibility needs to be consistently prevalent to ensure maximization of return on investment.

The committee was informed that the Department of Children and Families’ newly created Fatality Advisory Committee would be presenting recommendations to the Prevention Committee it is critical that these recommendations are integrated into the state plan.

Announcements

- February is National Leadership Month - Community partners are asked to come and honor their parent leaders on February 24, 2017 at the National Conference Center. Both parent leaders and professionals who assisted the parent leaders will be awarded with a certificate for their commitment and contribution.
- On February 2, 2017, the Pascale Sykes Foundation and the Aspen Institute will be hosting a “Two Gen” conference in Cumberland County.
- April is Child Abuse Prevention Month – On April 4, 2017 at the Military Park in Newark there will be an event to raise awareness about child abuse in the community. There will be pinwheels planted throughout the park to represent a safe and happy childhood. The committee discussed several options to raise awareness about prevention of child abuse in the community. It was determined that a plan should be made to raise awareness in 2018.
- On May 11, 2017 Montclair University will hold their 6th annual conference regarding early childhood mental health consultations and on May 12, 2017 they will hold a think tank to discuss the limitations of services for preschool expulsion and suspension. These events will feature Dr. Walter Gilliam as the keynote speaker.



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Next Meeting – March 2, 2017 in Trenton.